

REMARKS

Applicant amended the specification to include a reference to FIG. 3 in the Brief Description of the Figures. No new matter was added by such amendment.

Additionally, applicant hereby requests that the United States Patent and Trademark Office records be updated to reflect the correct Attorney Docket Number as SJ09-2000-0158, rather than 5075-0028.

Examiner's Response to Previous Amendment

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

1. Claims 1-5, 7, 8, 10, 14, 16-19, 22-27 and 40 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hira et al. (US 5,910,864), hereinafter Hira, in view of Hakey et al. (US 5,776,660), hereinafter Hakey.

Applicant duly notes and gratefully acknowledges the absence of the prior rejection of the above noted claims under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Hira.

Examiner's prior recitations re Hira as to the method for a transducer slider are also noted.

Examiner claims that regarding claims 1-5, 14, 16, 22 and 40, Hira discloses:

- (a) coating a substrate with a radiation-sensitive layer;
- (b) image wise exposing the radiation-sensitive layer to radiation according to an intensity pattern;
- (c) developing the image into the radiation-sensitive layer; and
- (d) transferring the image into the substrate to form a transducer slider having a surface profile comprising a tapered edge or a rounded corner.

Examiner admits that "Hira does not disclose the intensity pattern enabling specific levels of removal of portions of the radiation sensitive layer according to the specific intensity pattern used."

Examiner's recitations re claims 5 and 6, 7 and 8, 10, 17-19, and 23-27 are the same as those that appeared in his prior action when such claims were rejected as being anticipated by Hira. If applicant's prior amendment cured these 102 rejections by amending claims 1 and 40 only, there is no need for applicant to include a discussion of Examiner's comments re these claims in its current remarks.

Applicant has further amended claim 1 to recite a transducer slider *having at least one tapered edge*, and also provided that the radiation-sensitive layer of the slider is exposed to radiation according to an intensity pattern *having a gradient conforming to said at least one tapered edge*. Similar amendments appear in newly amended claim 40. While Hakey shows the ability to make holes in a substrate, FIG. 1A-1E, for example, there is nothing in Hakey that teaches the tapered edges and rounded corners of applicant's disclosure. The method of providing the slider patterns of applicant's invention are, by Examiner's own admission, not found in Hira. And applicant contends that such methods are neither taught nor suggested by Hakey.

2. Claim 9 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hira and Hakey in view of Dickerson, Jr. (hereinafter Dickerson) (US 6,350,506).

Examiner takes the position that Hira and Hakey disclose all the described features of claim 9, but do not teach or suggest that the radiation is photonic. Taking the position that Dickerson teaches exposing a surface to laser radiation that is monochromatic radiation, Examiner argues that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to substitute the radiation of Hira and Hakey with photonic radiation via a laser as taught by Dickerson. The method of Dickerson is a laser method for roughening surfaces. For slider applications, the surfaces should be as smooth as possible.

Applicant argues that the references to Dickerson are rendered moot in view of the amendments proposed to claim 1.

3. Claims 11-13 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hira and Hakey in view of Block et al. (hereinafter Block) (US 6,033,766).

Examiner takes the position that, regarding claims 11-13, Hira and Hakey disclose all the described features, but does not teach or suggest the intensity pattern being provided using a grayscale mask. Applicant would argue that Hira and Hakey do not teach “patterning” and that the proposed amendments to claim 1 distinguish over the combination of Hira and Hakey alone or whether such combination is considered with Block. Applicant goes on to argue that Hira’s reference to “patterning” is sufficiently vague and that the addition adds little to support Examiner’s premise that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide the intensity pattern of Hira and the teachings of Hakey using a gray scale mask as taught by Block.

4. Claims 20 and 21 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hira and Hakey in view of Yoshida et al. (Yoshida) (US %,331,495).

The rejections of claims 20-21 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hira and Hakey in view of Yoshida et al (US 5,331,495) are rendered moot in view of Applicant’s amendments to claim 1. Claims 20-21, which set forth exposing the substrate to a liquid etchant, are dependent on amended claim 1. Moreover the method of Yoshida when combined with that of Hira and Hakey would not provide rounded edges.


For the reasons set forth above Applicant respectfully requests that the proposed amendments to claim 1 be entered and that the claim rejections under 35 USC §103 be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

For all of the above reasons, it is submitted that the pending claims define an invention that is patentable over the art. As the application should now be in condition for allowance, a prompt indication to that effect would be appreciated. If the Examiner has any questions concerning this response to the outstanding Office Action and the amended claims provided, he is welcome to contact the undersigned at (650) 251-7700.

Respectfully submitted,

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